

Student Spotlight

Class: *Les Grands Écoliers*

Congratulations to our young poets! Professeure Nathalie and her class recently took part in the Concours de Poésie de la Francophonie, a French-language writing contest organized by Bayard Jeunesse Publishing. Using *Fenêtre ouverte*, a 1905 painting by Henri Matisse, as a source of inspiration, your children penned a vibrant poem about the sea and the sights and smells of summer. Bravo à Amélie, Axelle, Dries, Michèle!



Henri Matisse, *Open Window, Collioure*, 1905. © The National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC

Coups de pinceau

La brise pittoresque aromatique d'été,
Les navires si proches et pourtant si éloignés,
Comme un soupir, une secrète échappée.

Une vue de la fenêtre élégante,
Les bateaux bordent l'océan,
Les rayons du soleil sur les plantes vibrantes.

Un ciel pastel captivant,
Un moment figé dans le temps,
L'odeur des fleurs flottant dans le vent.

Class: *Les Détectives*

Ready for an adventure? With Professeure Marie, the boys wrote an action-packed story about four kids with special powers, a commander who's able to become invisible, and a mischievous monkey. (Spoiler alert: Their epic, *En aventure sur la base militaire*, also involves a mysterious

island, a wrecked ship, a flying cheese pizza named Isa, and “a strange alien” who goes by Skibety Toilet!)

“I want to emphasize how proud I am of them,” Professeure Marie said of her students, who worked together remotely over the course of six weeks. “Completing this kind of project online is no easy task, and I found them amazing, funny, and incredibly creative. Bravo to them!”
Bravo à Joshua, Liam, Nolan, Paul & Zachary!

Read their work (avec un lien pour lire l’histoire en ligne ?)

Where we’re going, we don’t need roads! To blend tech and creative skills, Professeure Marie had her students invent *une machine du futur* – a futuristic machine. That’s how Paul came up with “Le Insta-Trans.”

“My machine is used to travel very fast,” he wrote in French. “The machine is the size of a truck. There are two parts: a cabin that can hold 1 to 2 people; there are no windows. The second, larger part contains the thermal engines.” Climb aboard, buckle up, activate the propellers, set your destination, and hit *Entrer*. Estimated travel time to Chicago’s Sears Tower: 1.25 seconds!

Take a closer look at Paul’s Insta-Trans (avec un lien vers son PowerPoint ?) > Pareil: on le met sur le site web ou juste le lien de la newsletter?

- Paul

Private lesson, age 4

Bonjour! A few months ago, Faiz logged in for his weekly French class with Professeure Annabelle. They kicked things off with their “routine”: saying the day’s date in French (*Aujourd’hui, nous sommes mercredi 5 février 2025*), followed by the weather (*Il fait soleil ! Il n’y a pas de neige à San Diego !*).

On to the main topic of the day: the upcoming celebration of Valentine’s Day! With his teacher, Faiz learned French words associated with *la Saint-Valentin*, like *cœur* (heart), *amour* (love), *amitié* (friendship), *chocolat* (chocolate), and *rouge* (red), and what the day means for different French-speaking regions of the world.

To conclude a lovely class, and before saying *au revoir*, the pair watched a Valentine’s Day-special episode of *Toupie et Binou*, a popular children’s animated show from Quebec. *À la semaine prochaine!*

Lien de la vidéo YouTube : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QDv8OnYkQOM>

Class: *Les Explorateurs*

The two boys are mesmerized. Their eyes grow as wide as saucers as they watch an elephant approach *un canapé* (a couch), sniff it, and eat it whole. Without skipping a beat, the hungry giant goes on to swallow *un bananier* (a banana tree), *un nez* (a nose), *un rocher* (a rock), and *une télévision* (a TV).

Back in January, Professeure Nathalie used a funny educational video to teach her students about the [e] sound and the different ways it can be formed in French. Then it was the kids' turn to come up with words that contain the same sound. “*Café* (coffee),” said Lucca. “*Tablée* (eating companions),” answered Nathan, “*écran* (screen), *cerisier* (cherry tree), *oranger* (orange tree), *cahier* (notebook).”

Their teacher congratulated them and concluded: “As you can see, the [e] sound can be written in three ways: with *é*, *er*, and *ez*. The sound is pronounced exactly the same way but can be spelled differently. That’s why French is a little tricky!”

Lien de la vidéo YouTube : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-rH6xNWaxnQ>

Private lesson, age 10

Do you think talking about the weather is mundane small talk? Try doing it in French!

That’s how Professeure Laura likes to start her classes. In February, she used cue cards with words like *froid* (cold), *vent* (wind), *éclair* (lightning), and *brouillard* (fog) to help John-John practice his reading skills. Then, out loud, he had to use each word in a sentence. For instance: *Il ne fait pas froid* (It’s not cold); *Je ne sais pas si il y a du vent* (I don’t know whether it’s windy); *Il n’y a pas d’éclairs aujourd’hui* (There are no lightnings today); *Il y avait du brouillard hier* (There was some fog yesterday).

Needless to say, the teacher was thrilled with her student’s efforts: “*Bravo*,” she told him, “*c’est très bien!*”

Adult French Classes

Curious what a French class for grown-ups looks like? We have the answer!

“Adult classes offer an opportunity to learn the basics of French communication and build on existing knowledge through fun and interactive small-group activities,” she explains. “This year, we’re focusing on level A1. The goal is to be able to communicate in everyday situations that are directly relevant to our students’ needs. We also work on pronunciation, grammar, and verb conjugation to help build a strong foundation in French and develop the confidence to express oneself in a variety of contexts – whether in the present, past, or future. All of this takes place in a warm and welcoming atmosphere!” says the instructor.

Class: ***Adult FLE (French Beginner)***

Our adult classes often take a practical turn.

After a classic grammar exercise on French prepositions – like *sur* (on), *entre* (between), or *à gauche de* (to the left of) – Professeure Perrine's students turned to page 48: Asking About Accommodation. They began by practicing their reading skills, deciphering inn and hotel brochures, before listening to a phone conversation between a potential client and a front desk clerk.

The goal for the day was to acquire specific vocabulary and study different ways to ask questions in French. For example: *Est-ce que vous avez de la place pour samedi prochain ?* (Do you have any availability for next Saturday?) *Quel est le prix par personne ?* (What's the price per person?) *Le petit-déjeuner est-il inclus ?* (Is breakfast included?) *Vous avez la carte d'adhérent ?* (You have a membership card?)

Armed with their new knowledge, the group was ready to travel to France – or any French-speaking country!

Lien de l'audio : <https://youtu.be/kFPrgVo3qIM?si=ItkZWPH7pnbGmUVn&t=323>

Bravo à Eric, Jarrod, Jillian, Michele & Sherry!

By Clément Thiery

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